

U. S. ASSUMES CONTROL OF EASTERN RAILROADS TO Avert War Crisis

Food Shortage and Handicap Placed on Munitions Supply Causes Most Drastic Step in Railway History.

ROADS EAST OF CHICAGO TO RUN AS UNIT REGARDLESS OF OWNERSHIP

Vice Presidents Appointed by "Railroads' War Board" to Operate All Lines Involved by Emergency Demand—Will Expedite Movement of Fuel, Edibles and Materials Necessary to Whip Huns.

The railroads' war board last night announced the most drastic step yet taken in the history of railroading on the American continent, to meet the tremendous emergency demands of war-time transportation.

The board directed that "all available facilities on all railroads east of Chicago be pooled to the extent necessary to furnish maximum freight movement."

The operation of the roads, the war board states, will be "entirely regardless of their ownership and individual interests." A statement from the board continues:

"The operating vice presidents of the eastern lines have been appointed a committee to operate as a unit all lines involved and have been given instructions and authority to adopt all measures which in their judgment may be necessary to relieve the present situation and assure the maximum amount of transportation."

To Operate as Unit.

This means, if the order is carried out literally, and there is every expectation it will be, all railroads east of Chicago will be operating virtually as a unit in freight carriage, directed by a war board in direct touch with the government.

The immediate effect of this action of greatest interest to the average citizen will be to expedite the movement of coal and food. The shortage of anthracite coal in eastern cities, including Washington, has become serious within the last few days. Within forty-eight hours the Department of Justice has been called upon by its special agent in Cleveland to investigate all railroads and to make assignments of food there, much of which consisted of perishable products spoiling in the cars or being nibbled by the frost.

Expedites War Orders.

But of even greater effect, so far as the government is concerned, will be the fact that, both in government and private plants, during the past week New England has suffered from a lack of coal, and big industries there have been hampered both by lack of coal and by lack of cars to convey war materials needed in manufacture.

In taking this step the railroads' war board acts in its capacity of a volunteer agency through which the railroads are seeking to co-operate with the government in the face of war-time exigencies. W. S. Gifford of the Council of National Defense, as chairman of the board, said last night that the board, with newspaper men Friday, pointed to the railroads' board as the best example of the sort of co-operation that is hoped will be formed by all major industries of the country.

Consults Board Members.

Since Mr. Willard's appointment to succeed Frank A. Scott at the head of the war industries board early last week, he has been in consultation with members of the railroads' war board, from which he resigned, however, as an official member. It was assumed last night Mr. Willard had been one of the chief factors of the problems confronting the prosecution of war industries to be transportation. Therefore he may have had a part in the movement to bring the railroads into one cluster of co-operation with the war industries board and other committees of the Council of National Defense by the railroads' war board.

Whatever may have been Mr. Willard's activity, the railroads' war board for some time has been studying the increasing congestion on eastern lines. In this section the roads have become overburdened by the large industrial activity. As a part of the program for relieving conditions it has addressed a letter to the fuel administration, which makes the following recommendations:

Shortens Rail Haul.

"That a survey be made by the fuel administration of present contracts of coal so as to shorten the rail haul from mine to consumer and to eliminate as far as possible the use of transshipment."

"Pooling of coal within reasonable limits, the war board said, 'will without doubt produce additional large savings, and the railroads are prepared to co-operate in any measures to expedite the fuel administration to that end.'"

Further recommendations made by the railroads' war board are: "That immediate measures be adopted to transfer movement of foodstuffs and other essential materials to southern and gulf ports to as large a degree as compatible with public interest, in order to relieve the eastern congested territory of an equivalent amount of train service."

"That immediate survey be made of all government requirements now evolving the movement of raw materials in and manufactured product out of centers of industry, so that accumulations on cars and line and in terminals will not occur as now, while product is awaiting use here or ocean transportation for foreign use."

In explaining the need for these steps the war board's statement says:

Overtaxed Rail Capacity.

"The concentration in certain parts of eastern territory of vast government and industrial activities has overtaken the capacity of rail lines in that territory, considering the heavy movement of coal and other heavy commodities which formerly moved on coastwise vessels, but which now are shown upon the railroads, the heavy

BRITISH ARE GRINDING FIGHTING FORWARD IN CAMBRAI REGION

Fontaine Aflame and Bourlon Wood Probably Taken by Gen. Byng's Forces.

MOEUVRES IS CLOSELY INVESTED, IS REPORT

Germans Resisting Desperately. English Try to Drive Behind Main Hindenburg Line.

Hard fighting continued in the battle of Cambrai Saturday, with the British pushing determinedly northward on the Fontaine-Queant line, west of Cambrai. Unofficial reports late in the day indicated the probability that Gen. Byng's troops had wrested possession of the hotly disputed Bourlon wood from the Germans and had closely invested Moeuvres. The village of Fontaine, less than three miles from Cambrai, was reported in flames, suggesting the probability of an impending German retirement from that place.

Resisting Desperately.

The Germans are resisting desperately in the British advance, which is being pressed most energetically on this eastern front. Gen. Byng's evident intention is to drive in behind the main Hindenburg line, breached in Tuesday's surprise attack, and the Queant-Drocourt switch line, while still pushing his encircling movement of Cambrai to the north and east. The British have pushed considerably to the northwest of Moeuvres, however, and are hammering at Inchy, which the Germans are fighting determinedly to retain.

German Gain Temporary.

By the Associated Press. LONDON, November 24.—Fierce German counterattacks have been made today in the neighborhood of Bourlon woods, according to the official report from British headquarters in France tonight. The British line was forced to withdraw slightly, but later in the day the line was re-established and the high ground held. The text of the statement reads: "The British line was forced to withdraw slightly, but later in the day the line was re-established and the high ground held. The British line was forced to withdraw slightly, but later in the day the line was re-established and the high ground held."

Bourlon Wood Taken.

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Will Divert Congestion.

"The commission on car service will divert from those lines where the congestion is most acute all freight that can be handled by any other route until the congestion is relieved. The pooling of coal will be further extended wherever practicable. The national fuel administration is asked to arrange for supplying the various coal markets from the nearest sources in order to avoid waste of car efficiency. Any order of preference be given to any class of cars or freight routes in a slowing down of the operation of the transportation machine. A concerted flow of all traffic concurrently produces the best transportation results. The war board, therefore, emphasizes the freight movement, and the great volume of preference orders, which, by placing a substantial margin on the coal points, has the same plan, defeats its own object."

POISONED VACCINE TIPS ALMOST CAUSE TRAGEDY

Sent From Washington Into Kentucky; Infected With Tetanus Germs.

Special Dispatch to The Star.

LEXINGTON, Ky., November 24.—A wholesale infection with tetanus germs among a group of Winchester and Clark county, Ky., eighteen miles from here, has been narrowly averted. In compliance with the law that all school children should be vaccinated, Winchester druggists placed an order for a large quantity of vaccine points to be used as a precaution against smallpox. A Washington, D. C., firm with which the order was placed promptly shipped the points to local druggists here. An urgent message was received by local druggists from Winchester, Kentucky, that the vaccine had been tampered with, and in practically all cases where the points had been used tetanus had developed, resulting in deaths.

Druggists Urged to Lose No Time.

Druggists were urged to lose no time in gathering up all points which had been sold, and a warning was issued to physicians who had used the vaccine to immediately administer to each patient the serum treatment for tetanus. Winchester druggists immediately got busy, and soon were able to account for practically all of the points. The vaccine had not been administered to any patients here.



GAS MASK WAR WORK.

GOMPERS PLEDGES LABOR'S AID IN WAR

American Federation Head Asserts Workers Are in Conflict to End—Scout Strikes.

LENON ONLY DEFEATED

By the Associated Press. BUFFALO, N. Y., November 24.—Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor for thirty-five years, was re-elected today virtually without opposition. With him were returned Lenon, secretary of the federation, and John B. Lennon, treasurer, who was defeated by Daniel J. Tobin, president of the International Teamsters and Chauffeurs' Union.

The election of Mr. Gompers marked a continuation of his services as chief executive officer for only one year since 1892, and the veteran leader was greeted with rousing cheers as he took the floor to accept. He pledged undivided loyalty and effort for the cause of men who toil and declared the labor movement was at the most crucial period of its history. Alluding to the war, Mr. Gompers said no liberty-loving man would ask or seek a continuation of his services as chief executive officer for only one year since 1892, and the veteran leader was greeted with rousing cheers as he took the floor to accept. He pledged undivided loyalty and effort for the cause of men who toil and declared the labor movement was at the most crucial period of its history.

Not a Pacifist.

To make his position clear, Mr. Tobin, in accepting office, declared there was no "pacifist" in the labor movement. "Since war was declared," Mr. Tobin said, "I have tried to carry out the wishes of President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor and of President Wilson of the United States. I want no more war, but I want peace. We have no more war, but I want peace. We have no more war, but I want peace."

Prisoners Still Coming Back.

Prisoners were still coming back this morning. The correspondent passed two squadrons of mud-smearing German soldiers being brought back to the front. The fighting yesterday at Bourlon wood around Fontaine was of a desperate nature. Bourlon wood and the village site situated on high ground, which affords extensive observation in all directions, was captured by the British. The British troops yesterday morning were holding the village of Fontaine, and the southern fringe of the wood, and from these positions it was necessary to take the village of Fontaine and the southern fringe of the wood, and from these positions it was necessary to take the village of Fontaine and the southern fringe of the wood.

Fight With Bayonets.

At noon the Germans began putting a heavy artillery and machine gun barrage along the roads to the south of the wood, rendering communication with the advancing troops more difficult. Hand-to-hand fighting was begun almost as soon as the British entered the forest. This continued with great fierceness until the afternoon, when the British troops gradually forcing the Germans back foot by foot toward the northern edge of the forest.

Claims Check for British.

BERLIN, via London, November 24.—The supplementary official statement is (Continued on Second Page.)

Police Arrest Italian; Bomb Explodes in Station; 11 Die

Tragedy Follows Capture of Latin in Basement of Milwaukee Church—Explosion Shatters Building, Injures Many.

By the Associated Press. MILWAUKEE, Wis., November 24.—Eleven persons are known to have been killed, a number injured and several believed to be missing as a result of a bomb explosion in the central police station tonight.

The bomb was taken to the station by an Italian, who said he discovered it in the basement of the Madonna del Pompeii Catholic Church, in the Italian district.

The Italian was met near the station by Detective Bart Maloney. Maloney, escorting him into the station, placed the bomb, which was inclosed in a black box, on a table in the waiting room while he took the man into the office of Police Lieut. Flood.

Box Suddenly Explodes.

Detectors were on the second floor of the building at the time responding to roll call. When they came down the stairway and noticed the black box, one picked it up to examine it. The bomb then exploded. The lower floor of the building was shattered and every window throughout the structure was broken by the shock. The bodies of several of the prisoners may have perished. Among the known dead are: Detective Stephen H. Becker, Detective John Beahaver, Detective Fred Kaiser, Detective Albert Tempkin, Detective Henry Deckert, desk sergeant, Catherine Walker.

More Than Twenty-Five Arrested.

More than twenty-five Italians have been arrested in a dragnet which has been thrown into the third ward for all suspicious characters. Police officials refuse to comment on the arrest.

Held Small Bottle.

Lieut. Flood, in charge of the station at night, escaped. According to one of the detectives, the bomb was a cylinder shaped affair, about 1 foot in length and 8 inches in diameter. Inserted in the top was a small bottle of liquid, supposed to be nitroglycerine. The explosion, which was heard throughout the main section of the city, brought thousands of persons to the building where the bomb was exploded. The bodies of several of the prisoners may have perished. Among the known dead are: Detective Stephen H. Becker, Detective John Beahaver, Detective Fred Kaiser, Detective Albert Tempkin, Detective Henry Deckert, desk sergeant, Catherine Walker.

U. S. Steamer Schuykill Sunk; Forty of Crew Arrive in Port

Torpedo Attack in Mediterranean Reported to Navy Department—No Armed Guard Aboard. Probably All Saved.

The American steamer Schuykill has been torpedoed and sunk in the Mediterranean. The Navy Department was advised yesterday that forty men of her crew had been landed at a Mediterranean port. There was no naval armed guard aboard.

Whether there was loss of life is not known here, but it is assumed that the forty men rescued constituted the Schuykill's full complement.

FRENCH ACCOUNT FOR 1,030 GERMAN FOR FRENCH ARMY IN FRANCE, NOVEMBER 24

By the Associated Press. GRAND HEADQUARTERS OF THE FRENCH ARMY IN FRANCE, November 24.—The brilliant record of the French aviators including the members of the Lafayette squadron, for the month ending October 31, has been officially confirmed. There also were 612 others over the German lines which probably were destroyed but confirmation of the fact was not obtainable. This makes a grand total of 1,030. Twenty-two German captive balloons also were destroyed.

FURIOUS BATTLES ON BRENTA RIVER STILL INDECISIVE

Austro-German Armies, However, Have So Far Failed to Smash Italian Defenses.

GEN. DIAZ'S PIAVE LINE STILL REMAINS INTACT

Chances of Italians Holding Their Present Positions and Saving Venice Increase Hourly.

The Italian front is still holding firmly, although its defense is costing the Italians heavily in men. There were further efforts by the Austro-German masses to break through to the west end of the line between the Asiago plateau and the Brenta, but Gen. Diaz's troops successfully withstood these carefully prepared thrusts. The Piave river remains intact, and apparently the enemy's efforts to force it are no longer serious, although Rome today reports the breaking up by artillery fire of hostile attempts to lay pontoons.

In the important mountain front between the Brenta and the Piave the struggle is still a desperate one. No further progress is claimed by Berlin in this sector. On the contrary, the Italians have been counter attacking heavily, although, Berlin declares, without success. High military opinion, recently expressed, that the chances of the Italians holding the Piave line and saving Venice are increasing hourly, seems likely to be strengthened by the tone of the latest Italian official statements, showing continued successful resistance by the Italians to the furious attempts being made by the enemy to pierce their northern front.

Contest Every Foot of Ground.

By the Associated Press. ITALIAN HEADQUARTERS IN NORTHERN ITALY, November 24.—Heavy fighting continued throughout last night on both sides of the Brenta river, with the result indecisive. Between the Brenta and Piave rivers the Italians are contesting every foot of ground. The enemy is attempting to come down the Brenta valley on both banks of the river in an endeavor to reach the open plain. On the west bank the fourth army drove back two attacks in force. On the west bank the fourth army drove back two attacks in force. On the west bank the fourth army drove back two attacks in force.

NORTHCLIFFE'S BROTHER IS MADE AIR MINISTER

Baron Rothermere, Also a Newspaper Publisher, Picked for Important British Post.

By the Associated Press. LONDON, November 24.—Baron Rothermere, chief proprietor of the Daily Record and Mail of Glasgow and the Leeds Mercury, has accepted the post of air minister in the British cabinet, according to the Pall Mall Gazette.

Baron Rothermere (Harold Sidney Harnsworth) is the younger brother of Viscount Northcliffe. He was born in 1868. Lord Northcliffe himself was offered the post as head of the air ministry a few days ago by Premier Lloyd George, and in declining the position explained that his refusal was due to dissension with some of the methods of Mr. Lloyd George's administration.

Viscount Northcliffe resigned as chairman of the air board owing to the British premier's offer of the air ministry to Baron Rothermere.

Baron Rothermere was mentioned as possible food controller in 1914, but failed to receive the appointment.

Proposes System of Passes.

The system of identification by the inspection of passes, as proposed by the department's statement, is not expected to accomplish a complete protection of shipping, and the department is engaged in planning a system of passes to be issued to persons with authority to enter the zone. "Every operator of a water front facility," says the department regulation, "shall on or before December 1 file with the United States marshal at New York a statement describing the system of fire patrol and fire prevention measures to be taken at the water front, and the department is engaged in planning a system of passes to be issued to persons with authority to enter the zone. "Every operator of a water front facility," says the department regulation, "shall on or before December 1 file with the United States marshal at New York a statement describing the system of fire patrol and fire prevention measures to be taken at the water front, and the department is engaged in planning a system of passes to be issued to persons with authority to enter the zone."

BULGARS ARE DISPERSED IN MACEDONIA RAIDS

PARIS, November 24.—An official statement in regard to the Macedonian front says:

"Eastern Theater, November 23.—The enemy attempted on the British front several raids which were all dispersed before they reached our positions. The situation is quiet on the right bank of the Vardar and the Serbian front. North of Monastir the artillery action was quite intense. Our aviators have bombed enemy establishments at Vashbaretin, on the road to Frilip."

Read and Heed

Take the store announcements in this issue of The Star as your shopping guide and do your Christmas shopping tomorrow. The best buys await the early shopper.

180,000 Pledges in Connecticut

HARTFORD, Conn., November 24.—Food pledges have been signed by about 180,000 persons in Connecticut during a campaign directed by the State Administrator. It was announced today by the state council of defense.